



UNIVERSITY^{AT}ALBANY
State University of New York

New Graduate Student Orientation

Dean's Welcome

We are delighted that you have gained admission to one of our graduate programs and excited to have you join our campus community. We are proud of the strength of scholarship that exists across our 140+ programs, and are committed to helping you reach your academic goals. On behalf of the faculty and staff of the University, I extend a collective welcome to each and every one of you.



I would also like to bring to your attention a variety of items that can help orient new graduate students and keep you connected to the information you need both as you begin your graduate study and throughout your work here. This information is rooted in many different offices and departments, and it may be difficult for new students to find. Some of the listings may already have been brought to your attention, but I would rather be inclusive and redundant in a helpful effort than leave out items of importance.

My heartiest welcome to you and best wishes for success. I look forward to working with you.

Dr. Kevin Williams

Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education

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I. Electronic Communications: myUAlbany & UAlbany Mail

There are two primary ways that the University will communicate with you:

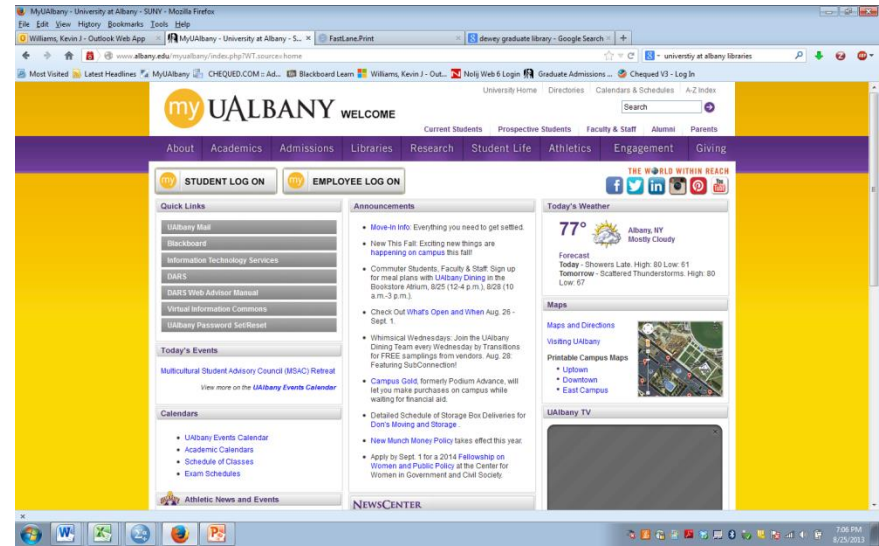
- The myUAlbany web portal (www.albany.edu/myualbany) brings many of the University's services to your fingertips
- UAlbany mail – your albany.edu email is the official form of campus communication

Should you need assistance accessing or using these electronic resources, contact the Information Technology Services (ITS) Help Desk, located in LC 27. They can also be reached through their website: http://www.albany.edu/its/svc_help.php

myUAlbany

One-stop place for information for students, faculty, staff

- Events calendar
- Academic calendars
- Quick links (UAlbany mail, Blackboard, ITS, etc.)
- Campus announcements
- Student financial accounts
- Register for classes, check your grades
- Parking decals



UAlbany Mail



All students receive a UAlbany Mail account. Email is the official means of campus communication so please access your albany.edu email on a routine basis.

All messages from the University (and your department) will be sent to your UAlbany Mail address.

A recent upgrade to UAlbany Mail has increased the size of mailboxes to 25GB. Each mailbox has a recipient rate limit per mailbox for a 24-hr period of 10,000 recipients.

II. Academics

The University offers over 140 graduate programs leading to advanced certificates, master's and doctoral degrees. These programs are spread over nine schools and colleges, and several of our programs are ranked near the top in the nation. A full listing of the academic programs at UAlbany can be found on the Graduate Education website.

Each program has its own curriculum, but there are general regulations that apply to all graduate students. The Dean of Graduate Studies, the Offices of Graduate Studies and Graduate Admissions, and the Graduate Academic Council exercise general responsibility for graduate study, admissions and for university-wide policies, procedures, requirements, and standards of graduate study.

The role of these units is to support the academic standards of the University and the quality and validity of the degrees it confers and to ensure fair and equitable treatment of all students engaged in graduate study. Academic regulations are specified in the Graduate Bulletin (to be discussed shortly).

Graduate Program Administration

The development, promotion, and operation of individual programs and the advisement and interests of students in them are a primary responsibility of the individual schools and departments that provide the graduate instruction. Each program should offer orientation programs for their new students, providing students with specific details on program requirements, curriculum, and milestones. Departments also assign advisors to incoming students. Please check with your department about the assignment of an advisor, if you have not already been assigned one.

Establishing a healthy relationship with your graduate program advisor is often a key to success in graduate school. Make the effort – it will be worth it!

Each term you will need to discuss future enrollment plans and obtain an Advisement Verification Number (AVN) from your advisor in order to gain access to register for classes in the next semester.

Graduate Bulletin

The Graduate Bulletin provides information about degree requirements, academic regulations and policies that apply to all graduate students, and the program curriculum to which you have been admitted. The Bulletin also provides course descriptions for your program. The official bulletin is published online and is updated on a regular basis. It can be found at: <http://www.albany.edu/graduatebulletin/>

The Graduate Bulletin is meant to be a reference during your study to answer questions that may arise. Please consult it regularly. Also, as a graduate student you are bound by the graduate studies policies listed in the Graduate Bulletin. Please read over these policies early to avoid making a serious mistake.

The academic policies and guidelines of the University are also summarized in the student resources section of the Graduate Education website: <http://www.albany.edu/graduate/student-resources.php>

Academic Integrity

It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with and abide by the University's conduct regulations pertaining to academic integrity. Please familiarize yourself with the details of these expectations, which are outlined here: <http://www.albany.edu/studentconduct/introduction.php>

In addition, the Graduate Bulletin lists standards for academic integrity. Make sure that work presented under your name is, in fact, your work!

Ombuds Program

In the future, should you need an objective ear to hear out any academic concerns in a confidential advisory manner, you might want to take advantage of the graduate Ombuds program. This program provides independent, informal, and non-partisan counsel to graduate students on matters relating to University experiences or involving dispute resolution or interpersonal misunderstandings, particularly those involving the graduate student's academic program or academic progress. It is NOT part of the university's grievance procedure or judicial system. Rather, ombuds help mediate student problems so that they do not escalate into major issues.

Academic Calendars

Please be aware of deadlines published in the academic calendar for registration activities (including course adds and drops):

www.albany.edu/registrar/academic_calendar.php

Please additionally note that deadlines for registration activities differ from the schedules for financial liabilities and refunds:

<http://www.albany.edu/studentaccounts/liability.php>

Should you contemplate registration changes after registering, carefully review these pages.

III. Library Facilities & Resources



University Library



Science Library



Dewey Graduate Library

Access to excellent library facilities is essential for a successful graduate education. At UAlbany, we have three libraries that support your learning and scholarship

Collectively, the libraries have more than 2 million volumes and rank among the top 100 university libraries in the U.S. They support access to over 100 web based electronic data bases, including MEDLINE, Science Direct, EBSCO, and INSPEC.

University Library: The largest of the libraries, located on the uptown campus; focus is on the humanities, social sciences, education, and business.

Science Library: Opened on the uptown campus in 1999 (behind the Campus Center); serves the whole campus community but houses collections and offers specialized services for departments of Atmospheric Sciences, Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Physics, Computer Science, Mathematics & Statistics, Nanoscale Science and Engineering, and Public Health.

Dewey Graduate Library: Located in the downtown campus in the Hawley Building . Supports the curricula in School of Criminal Justice, Rockefeller School of Public Affairs and Policy, the School of Social Welfare, and the department of Information Studies.

Graduate Students Library Guide

The University Libraries has published an online guide that summarizes library and university services and resources specifically for Master and PhD students. This guide is outstanding and very comprehensive – check it out!

<http://libguides.library.albany.edu/graduatestudents>

This guide includes Information on:

- Circulation services
- Electronic reserves
- Group study rooms
- Study carrels and lockers
- Information Commons
- Interlibrary loan
- Library accounts
- Research services

IV. Resources for Teaching Assistants

Graduate students who are TAs are encouraged to visit the Institute for Teaching, Learning, and Academic Leadership (ITLAL) for ideas and assistance with their teaching responsibilities. ITLAL serves the UAlbany faculty and teaching staff through programs of instructional, curriculum and faculty development. There are several workshops and events held each semester for all instructors – see their website for details (<http://www.itlal.org/>)

The Preparing Future Faculty Program at ITLAL is designed to assist graduate students with developing the skills requisite for good teaching practice, to help prepare graduate students for the job market, and to facilitate their transition to faculty members. This program complements existing departmental professionalization programs that already give us some “best practices” on campus, while at the same time make it possible for students in departments that do not have such programs to prepare for the role of college or university faculty member.

V. Research

Research is an integral part of graduate education, but it takes different forms across the various disciplines at the University. There are specific regulations that govern research involving human or animal subjects. It is important that you discuss your research interests and projects and seek advice on designing and conducting research studies.

All researchers – faculty and students – must comply with the university policies and federal and state laws and regulations. The Office of Regulatory Research Compliance (ORRC) supports and promotes ethical research practices on campus. Please visit the ORRC website (<http://www.albany.edu/orrc/>) for information on training for research with human participants (governed by the Institution Review Board) and use of animals (IACUC). You must complete the training appropriate to your discipline before conducting any research.

VI. Financial Services & Aid

The Student Financial Center (Campus Center G-26) offers one-stop assistance for matters related to financial aid, billing, and student financial accounts: <http://www.albany.edu/studentservices/>.

The Office of Financial Aid (Campus Center G-25) provides assistance with two types of loans for graduate students: federal direct unsubsidized (Stafford) loans and direct graduate PLUS loans.

Information on funding graduate studies can be found on the Graduate Education website: <http://www.albany.edu/graduate/graduate-tuition-costs.php>.

Graduate Assistantships are allocated to and managed by departments. These assistantships are awarded on a competitive basis, mostly to doctoral students. There a limited number of Administrative Unit Graduate Assistantships that are open to all graduate students (see the Graduate Education link provided above for a listing).

VII. International Education

International students enrich the academic community at UAlbany. Currently, international students make up about 18% of matriculated graduate students. Direct support of international students is provided by the office of International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS): <http://www.albany.edu/iss/>.

International students must check in with ISSS upon arrival. Their office is in Science Library G-40 (email: iss@albany.edu). ISSS assists students with visa status maintenance and health insurance, and provides ongoing advice to international students and visiting scholars. It also provides a comprehensive orientation to all new international students. If you are an international student, and did not attend the ISSS orientation, please contact them ASAP.

VIII. Health & Welfare

University Health Center

The University Health Center provides on-going, consistent, high-quality primary health care to University at Albany students that promotes the good physical health and well-being to support student success and life long healthy habits.

All enrolled students are entitled to care at the University Health Center. The Health Center is located at 400 Patroon Creek Blvd, a short ride from the uptown campus. Shuttle service is available every 30 minutes from the Science Library and Collins Circle to Patroon Creek. See the Parking and Mass Transit website for a schedule.

Incoming students who are registered for 6 or more credits must provide proof of immunity to the diseases measles, mump, and rubella. Please check with the Health Center to make sure you have proof of immunity on record.

Health Insurance

Domestic graduate students enrolled in at least 6 credits are eligible for the UAlbany Student Health Insurance Plan. You can enroll directly through UnitedHealthCare – visit www.uhcsr.com to learn more and sign up.

University Counseling Center

All enrolled students are also entitled to assistance at the University Counseling Center (www.albany.edu/counseling_center). The Center offers individual and group counseling and various prevention and health promotion services. Counseling is confidential and offered on a short-term basis to registered students. Costs are covered by your tuition and fees.

Disability Resource Center

The Disability Resource Center is ready to provide assistance to eligible individuals striving for success. You can review their offerings at www.albany.edu/disability.

IX. Office of Graduate Education

The Office of Graduate Education is dedicated to academic excellence in graduate education at the University at Albany and advocates for support for graduate programs and graduate students. The office provides several functions, which fall into two broad domains: Graduate Admissions and Graduate Studies.

Graduate Admissions

The office of Graduate Admissions, directed by Assistant Dean of Graduate Education and Director of Graduate Admissions Michael DeRensis, brought you into the University. They manage the graduate application and admission process for the University and provide oversight for admissions policy.

Graduate Studies

Staff in Graduate Studies are also responsible for getting you out (with your degree). Staff clear all certificates, master's and doctoral degrees, to ensure that they meet the standards of the University and requirements of the degree program.

Under the direction of Vice Dean for Graduate Education Jonathan Bartow, Graduate Studies is also responsible for (1) guiding and supporting faculty efforts to develop and maintain academic program registrations on campus and with SUNY; (2) administering and enforcing academic policies; (3) coordinating and supporting the operation of the Graduate Academic Council; and (4) maintaining the Graduate Bulletin.

Graduate Studies is especially proud of its role in fostering the appreciation of diversity on campus. Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies Betty Shadrick directs and supports activities and programs that support inclusion and diversity across the graduate curriculum. Programs in support of diversity can be found at <http://www.albany.edu/graduate/diversity-programs.php>.

Contact Information

Staff in the Office of Graduate Education are available to answer questions and provide assistance on academic and administrative matters, should you be unable to obtain your answer in your academic program office. Feel free to seek assistance:

Email: graduate@albany.edu

Office: University Administration Building
Room 121
1215 Western Avenue

Website: <http://www.albany.edu/graduate/index.php>

X. Graduate Student Association

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is a student organization dedicated to assisting and supporting graduate students in all programs. The GSA Executive Board is made up of elected and appointed graduate students. Various committees, also composed of graduate students, are responsible for planning and conducting activities.

The GSA offers campus wide educational, cultural, and social programming for graduate students. It also offers research and travel grants to current graduate students. Travel grants are intended to pay for or offset travel and other costs related to conference and/or exhibition participation. Research grants are intended to pay for or offset costs incurred while conducting sanctioned research.

The GSA Office is located in CC 165B and offers many services to students, including fax machine, printer and copier, and free local phone calls. The office also has a coffee club and lounge area, offering a place to connect with other graduate students.

The programs and services offered by the GSA are funded by the graduate student activity fee that appears on your tuition bill. All graduate students are members and entitled to privileges of membership. Visit the GSA webpage and get involved (<http://www.albany.edu/gsa/index.shtml>).

XI. Parking and Mass Transit Services

- Students planning to park vehicles on any of the University's campuses will need to purchase a parking decal. This information can be found on the Parking and Mass Transit Services website: <http://www.albany.edu/pmts/parking.php>
- The University also provides mass transit in the form of UAlbany buses and a partnership with the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA). More information can be found on the Parking and Mass Transit Services website: http://www.albany.edu/pmts/mass_transit.php
- The Office of Parking Management and Mass Transit is located on Indian Quad on the main campus.

XII. Housing Resources

- The Department of Residential Life manages on campus housing. Information regarding availability and housing options can be found on their website:
<http://www.albany.edu/housing/>
- Off campus housing information can also be found via the Residential Life website:
<http://www.albany.edu/housing/offcampus.shtml>



XIII. SUNY Card and Meal Plan Options

- Incoming students who have registered for classes can obtain a SUNYCard. The SUNYCard serves as photo identification and provides access to certain buildings on campus, meal plans, bus services, and library services. Further information can be found on the SUNYCard website: <http://www.albany.edu/uas/sunycard.php>
- Meal plan options and details about adding money to your SUNYCard account are also available on their website.
- SUNYCard is location in the Campus Center.